



CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20505

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

Office of the Assistant  
to the Director

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Statement by William E. Colby

The action of the House Select Committee on Intelligence to recommend that the House of Representatives adopt the proposed resolution is indeed, in the words of the resolution, "a grave matter". It goes to the heart of the question of whether the United States can conduct intelligence operations essential to the safety and welfare of our country.

On many occasions I have stated that an investigation into our intelligence activities should benefit both the nation and the intelligence agencies by clarifying the nature of modern intelligence as against its old images. This must be done in a fashion, however, which protects the essential secrets of intelligence which have been recognized throughout the history of the Republic since President Washington. Its judgments must also be reached in a serious and sober fashion reflecting the gravity of the nation's needs for intelligence.

As indicated in the attached letter with respect to this particular subpoena, and as reflected in the large volume of other material already provided to the Senate Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations with Respect to Intelligence Activities, as well as the House Select Committee on Intelligence, I believe the Intelligence Community has been forthcoming in responding to the legitimate needs of the Congressional committees investigating this subject. I have frequently reiterated my belief that reasonable men of good will in the Congress and in the Executive can agree on those matters which need protection and those matters which need exposure. As a professional intelligence officer, and as charged directly by law with the protection of intelligence sources and methods against unauthorized disclosure, I cannot agree to the transfer of sensitive material in response to this subpoena in the absence of some agreed procedure as to its possible disclosure, which

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